DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 151 128 RC 010 391

AUTHOR	Kuvlesky, William P.
TITLE	A Tri-Ethnic Comparison of the Religious Involvements and Orientations of Texas Rural Youth: A Study of Black, White, and Mexican American Adolescents.
INSTITUTION	Texas A and M Univ., College Station. Texas Agricultural Experiment Station.
SPONS AGENCY	Cooperative State Research Service (DOA), Washington, D.C.
REPORT NO	TAES-H-3286
PUB DATE	Mar 78
NOTE	40p.; Paper presented at the Texas Academy of Science Annual Meetings (Lubbock, Texas, March 1978)
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.83 HC-$2.06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Adolescents; *Behavior Patterns; *Black Youth; *Caucasians; Comparative Analysis; High School Students; Interfaith Relations; *Mexican Americans; Parent Influence; Questionnaires; Religious Differences; *Religious Factors; *Rural Youth; Self Concept; Socioeconomic Status; Tables (Data)
IDENTIFIERS	*Texas

ABSTRACT

Utilizing data collected from high school sophomores in 1972 and 1973, the study investigated the religious behavior and orientations of rural Black, White, and Mexican American youth in reference to religious affiliation, church participation, religious self-image (perceptions by peers), religious identification as an impediment to social attainment, importance of religion in selecting a future spouse, and parents' church participation. In addition, the extent to which socioeconomic status (SES) influenced any differences by ethnic identity were explored. The Chi Square test and the Corrected Coefficient of Contingency were used for data analyses. Findings included: Mexican Americans were mainly Roman Catholic, Blacks were predominantly Baptist, and White youth had a greater diversity of church affiliation; Black girls had the highest rates of church participation while Mexican American boys had the lowest; Mexican Americans, particularly boys, were slightly more likely than others to consider religion important in selecting their future spouse; fathers attended church less frequent than mothers; generally, SES did not influence substantially either inter-ethnic variability of religious attributes or intra-ethnic patterns; Black youth more frequently viewed religion as an impediment than White youth (no information existed on Mexican American youth for this variable); almost all of the youth gave a religious affiliation. (NQ)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

lee 28-03-78

ED151128

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

William P. Kuvlesky

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

A TRI-ETHNIC COMPARISON OF THE RELIGIOUS INVOLVEMENTS AND ORIENTATIONS OF TEXAS RURAL YOUTH: A STUDY OF BLACK, WHITE, AND MEXICAN AMERICAN ADOLESCENTS*

William P. Kuvlesky

The Texas Agricultural Experiment Station

Texas A&M University

RCO 10391

* Paper presented at the 1978 Texas Academy of Science Annual Meetings, Lubbock, Texas, March, 1978. This report contributes to Texas Agricultural Experiment Station project H-3286, "Quality of Life as Influenced by Area of Residence." I wish to acknowledge the assistance of Cindy Gandy, Philip Steen and Deborah Fee in preparing the data for analysis. I am obviously indebted to the young people of Texas - without their generous cooperation this report could not exist.

INTRODUCTION

For some time I have been aware of the paucity of research on or about the religious attributes and involvements of rural youth in the U.S. In my judgment this is simply a reflection of the low priority that has been given for some years to religion as a significant social variable in our society by American sociologists. My speciality is the study of disadvantaged youth, including minority youth and rural youth. As a result of this continuing emphasis over more than a decade, I have overviewed a great deal of the accumulated research in Rural Sociology, Sociology, and other related social sciences in the process of developing synthesis of extant knowledge about various types of youth (Kuvlesky, 1973; Kuvlesky and Juarez, 1975; Kuvlesky and Boykin, 1977; Kuvlesky, 1977). It is seldom that one finds current research reporting on the religious attributes of youth, particularly rural, minority youth. Of the hundreds of research reports, for instance, that have been published or presented in the last ten years on the status aspirations and the status attainment process of rural youth, to my knowledge few involve variables pertaining to religion in any but the most superficial manner (i.e., church affiliation) (Preston, 1969; Yankelovich, 1974). Personally, I feel this paucity of interest is based on a widespread assumption that in general religion doesn't make much difference as a possible explanatory or conditioning variable for the things (variables) most of us are interested in.

Honesty compels me to admit that I, as a research sociologist, shared this assumption - without much critical reflection - until very recently. This past year I had the opportunity to do some intensive field observation oriented toward case studies of two small populations of rural young people in rather different geographical and cultural settings: Spanish Americans in

Northern Taos Co., New Mexico and Amish and Mennonite youth in Holmes Co., Ohio (Kuvlesky, 1977). What I observed about the life situations of these two groupings of youth caused me to seriously reflect about the assumption that religious attributes are not very fruitful for social science research. I came away from my intensive field experiences with a very definite feeling that religion and "the church," in their presence or absence, had a considerable significance for the life situations of the two sets of youth I observed. How is religion woven into the life situations of other rural youth; those from different areas, and of different ethnic origins?

It is this question I intend to address in the analysis reported here, utilizing a tri-ethnic comparative data set on Texas rural youth that I collected in 1972 and 1973. While this study predominantly focused on status projections and orientations toward social mobility, it included several scattered indicators of religious participation and orientations: enough to make it worthwhile to pull them together within a common focus for analysis. Given the paucity of existing research knowledge on religious attributes of rural youth and on inter-ethnic comparative analysis in general, I felt an exploratory, empirical analysis could contribute some important insights, even given the obvious limitations of the scope of the data. If such insignts do evolve, fruitful hypotheses to stimulate and guide future research could be expected.

OVERVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

Most of the research reported about rural populations is often badly dated, or concerned with limited community case studies, and almost never treats religious traits of rural youth (Hassinger, 1978: Chpt. 18; Nash, 1965; Burchinal, 1965; Salisbury, 1965: Chpt. 16). A few studies have

explored the association of religious affiliation with other variables - usually behavior viewed as deviant (Preston, 1969). As far as I know, no reported study has explored ethnic variability in religious attributes of rural youth. It is commonly assumed by many in our society that rural people are generally homogeneous in reference to religious affiliations, participation, and orientations. Although, at least one rural sociologist has recently warned against this assumption (Hassinger, 1978: 348-349). An inspection of several prominent Sociology of Religion texts turned up nothing on religious attributes of either rural or minority youth (Salisbury, 1965; Glock and Stark, 1965; Faulkner, 1972).

Ethnic variability is known to exist along a number of dimensions of valuations, attitudes, orientations, status aspirations, and even in some cases behavioral patterns. Results from analysis of data sets comparable to the one used here indicate differences of varying magnitude in the status aspirations and expectations, values, and language patterns of rural Black, White, and Mexican-American youth in Texas (Kuvlesky, Wright, and Juarez, 1971; Kuvlesky and Edington, 1976; Patella and Kuvlesky, 1973; Nyberg, 1978). While it should be fairly obvious that Mexican American youth, who are predominantly Roman Catholic, will vary in terms of religious attributes as compared with rural Black and White youth in East Texas, who are predominantly protestant, we have no research-based notions of what the nature or magnitude of these differences are. Yet, if our widely used notion of "ethnic subculture" has broad validity for explaining the life situations of ethnic youth, we should expect to find some marked variability in religious attributes among significantly differentiated ethnic units, including those we intend to study (Greeley and McCready, 1974: Chpts. 6 and 7). This research should contribute evidence to help evaluate the general

validity of the notion of comprehensive ethnic subcultures, and to what extent religion provides a basis for subcultural delineation.

TEXAS YOUTH STUDY (1972-1973)

The data utilized for this study were collected from high school sophomores as a result of two separate but highly coordinated field efforts as follows: Nonmetropolitan East Texas Black and White youth, Spring of 1972; and Nonmetropolitan South Texas Mexican-American youth, Spring of 1973. While the time lapse of one year between the collection of data on the Mexican-American sophomores and that of the other ethnic groupings might have produced a problem in comparability of the data sets, a recent report presenting findings on historical change in occupational projections of Mexican-American youth from the study area involved here indicated little significant change between 1967 and 1973 (Kuvlesky and Monk, 1975). Detailed descriptions of the study areas and respondents are available in Kuvlesky and Edington (1976).

Care was taken to insure that all data collection operations were identical in the two separate field investigations by utilizing standard operations. In each case all high school sophomores present in the schools selected for study on the day of the study were given questionnaires and immediately assured of the confidentiality of their responses. A trained interviewer read each item aloud giving the students enough time to complete their responses before proceeding. The questionnaires distributed were identical with respect to the variables involved in this analysis (see APPENDIX A).

In conclusion, the high level of comparability of the data, historical period of study, and study areas provides us with the best opportunity that has existed, as far as we know, to investigate broadly inter-ethnic variability

in religious involvement and orientations of rural youth.

SPECIFIC RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

My general objective is to see what my Texas Youth Study data can tell me about the religious behavior and orientations of rural youth and how these may vary by ethnic origins. Within the limits of my data I can explore these questions in reference to the following variables:

A. Religious Participation

   1. Religious Affiliation

   2. Church Participation of Subjects

B. Religious Orientations

   1. Religious Self-Image (Perceptions of how peers view the subject in this regard)

   2. Religious Identification as an Impediment to Social Attainment (Perception)

   3. Importance of Religion in Selection of Future Spouse (Relative to matching subject's religious identification)

C. Parents' Church Participation

   1. Mother's

   2. Father's

The instruments used to obtain responses pertaining to these variables are attached in APPENDIX A. I will discuss procedures pertaining to measurement at appropriate places later in the discussion of analysis.

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

My basic objective used to guide the analysis to be reported here is to determine to what extent ethnic differences exist, by sex, on each of the variables noted previously. I will use the Chi Square test and the Corrected

Coefficient of Contingency ($\bar{C}$) to assist in making judgments about the significance and magnitude of any differences observed (Champion, 1970). In addition, I will attempt to explore the extent to which socioeconomic status influenced any differences by ethnic identity that were observed.

This section is ordered by the nature of variables included and procedure of analysis used as follows:

I. Religious Affiliation and Participation of Youth

II. Youths' Religious Orientations

III. Parents' Religious Participation

IV. SES and Ethnic Differences

V. Summary of Findings

I. Religious Affiliation and Participation of Youth (Table 1)

The social differentiation of the Texas youth studied on religion by ethnicity is very strong ($\bar{C}$=.80). Almost all Mexican American youth identified themselves as Roman Catholic and fully 70% of the Blacks identified as Baptists. The dominant ethnic grouping ("Whites") are different from the two minority groupings in that they demonstrated much greater heterogeneity of religious affiliations than the minorities. Still, similar to the Blacks, a near majority of the Whites (49%) were Baptist and 84% indicated they were affiliated with a protestant denomination.

The more detailed measurement categories from which Table 1 was derived indicated that only one person of the Jewish faith was included in the total set of samples. It is also surprising to note that not a single East Texas Black indicated affiliation with the Roman Catholic Church; although, it is well known that many of these Black families originally came to Texas from Louisiana, where Catholic rural Black families are not uncommon.

Table 1. Ethnic Type of Texas Rural Youth and Religious Identification [1]

Religious Identification		Black %	White %	Mex. Amer. %
Baptist		71	47	0
Methodist	(Protestant)	12 (97)	14 (84)	0 (6)
Church of Christ		11	6	0
Other Protestants		3	17	8
Roman Catholic		0	13	84
None		3	3	4
No Information*		0	0	4
TOTAL		100	100	100
N		192	271	364

* Not included in Chi Square evaluation.

$\chi^2 = 645.95$

d.f. = 10

P = <.001

$\bar{C} = .80$

[1] Individual comparative ethnic data by sex was not provided because of the strong similarity between the male and female profiles of affiliation across ethnicity.

It can be safely concluded that ethnic origin is strongly associated with religious affiliation of the youth studied. One important commonality shared by the three ethnic groupings is that very few respondents indicated "no" church affiliation. Obviously then, it can be concluded that almost all youth of every ethnic type had a religious identification.

Church Participation (Table 2)

Belonging to a church is one thing, but being involved as an active participant is another thing. The results of statistical tests clearly indicate significant ethnic differences in frequency of church participation for both boys and girls. For both gender comparisons Black youth were found to attend church frequently to a substantially greater extent than the other two ethnic types. Among the males, Mexican Americans differed markedly from the others in having indicated a high rate of infrequent participation - fully half of the Mexican American boys indicated they attended church seldom or never. Correspondingly, they had by far the lowest proportion of "frequent participants" of any ethnic-gender category.

Given the ethnic differences noted, several common patterns of religious participation are important to note. First, a majority or near majority of all ethnic types indicated frequent church attendance, which means they went to church at least once a week. Secondly, a patterned gender difference within ethnic groups is clearly observable: a proportionately much greater number of boys as compared with girls attend church seldom or never.

II. Youths' Religious Orientations

1. Religious Self-Image (Table 3)

We included a question in our study aimed at producing an unobtrusive indicator of "religious self-image" - whether or not the respondent conceived

Table 2. A Tri-Ethnic Comparison of Texas Rural Youths' Frequency of Church Attendance

Frequency of Church Attendance	Males			Females		
	Black %	White %	Mex.Am. %	Black %	White %	Mex.Am. %
1. Never/Prac. Never (Seldom)	8 (23)	14 (31)	25 (51)	2 (7)	10 (21)	5 (17)
2. Few Times a Yr.	15	17	26	5	11	12
3. 1-2 Times a Mo.	25	20	12	18	21	21
4. Once a Week (Frequent)	38 (52)	32 (49)	31 (36)	50 (75)	36 (57)	52 (61)
5. Once a Wk. or More	14	17	5	25	21	9
6. No Information*	0	0	1	0	1	1
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100
N	98	133	178	94	138	201

*No Information was not included in Chi Square evaluations.

$X^2 = 35.44$	$X^2 = 26.98$
d.f. = 8	d.f. = 8
P = <.001	P = <.001
$\bar{C} = .35$	$\bar{C} = .31$

Table 3. Texas Rural Youths' Perceptions of Being Viewed as a Religious Person by Peers: A Tri-Ethnic Comparison by Sex

Considered Religious	Males			Females		
	Black %	White %	Mex.Am. %	Black %	White %	Mex.Am. %
Yes	52	42	51	53	59	71
No	44	49	49	43	36	29
No Infor.*	4	9	0	4	5	0
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100
N	98	133	147	94	138	186

* No Information was not included in Chi Square evaluations.

$X^2 = 1.38$ $X^2 = 7.02$

d.f. = 2 d.f. = 2

P = >.50 P = <.05

$\bar{C} = .20$

of themselves as a religious person. The question asked them to indicate whether or not their friends perceived the subject to be a religious person.

No significant differences existed among the ethnic groupings of boys in this regard - roughly half of each male grouping perceived themselves as being viewed as religious. Among the female ethnic groupings the differences were significant, particularly between Blacks and the other two types. Black girls markedly more often perceived themselves as being viewed as a religious person than all other ethnic sex types.

Perhaps the most noteworthy observation about the religious self-image indicator is the fact that generally the ethnic-sex groupings appear to be polarized into two contrasting subgroupings - those who have a view of themselves as a religious person and those who do not. Certainly one could hypothesize that this cleavage should produce some differentials in other orientations and behaviors (i.e. moral values, social conservatism, and moral behavior) (Preston, 1969). This should be a promising hypothesis to evaluate in future analysis of these data and in new research on youth.

2. Religion Impedes Social Attainment (Table 4)

Among a set of items used to measure "perceived opportunity" for attainment of achieved status goals (i.e., job prestige), we included one on whether or not the subject's religion would impede attainment of job aspirations. Unfortunately data is not available on the Mexican-American youth sample in this regard.

A comparative analysis of responses from Black and White East Texas youth by sex demonstrate clear ethnic differences. While a large majority of both ethnic types, regardless of gender, indicated their religion had no negative impact on their chances to achieve their status goals, markedly more Black youth deviated from this general pattern than White youth. Clearly

Table 4. Texas Rural Youths' Perceptions of Their Religion as an Impediment to Opportunity for Social Attainment: A Tri-Ethnic Comparison by Sex.

Degree of Impediment to Opportunity	Males			Females		
	Black %	White %	Mex.Am. %	Black %	White %	Mex.Am. %
None	77	91	No Infor.	82	95	No Infor.
Some	10	7	---	10	5	---
Much/Very Much	11	2	---	5	0	---
No Information*	2	0	---	3	0	---
TOTAL	100	100	---	100	100	---
N	98	133	178	94	138	201

* No Information is excluded from Chi Square evaluations, which include only Black and White samples.

$X^2 = 9.56$ $X^2 = 8.04$

d.f. = 2 d.f. = 2

P = <.01 P = <.02

$\bar{C} = .29$ $\bar{C} = .27$

the minority youth were much more likely (2 to 3 times as likely) to perceive religion as an impediment to attainment of their social status goals.

3. Importance of Religion of Future Spouse (Table 5)

We included an item on religion among a set of items utilized as a check-list of attributes entering into the selection of a future spouse. For each item the respondent was asked to indicate the importance the attribute held in the selection of his or her future spouse.

The differences among the ethnic groupings for both sexes were statistically significant but for the most part not very large. Mexican-American youth, particularly boys, were most likely to indicate religion was important in the selection of a spouse. And, White youth were most likely to view religion as relatively unimportant in this regard, particularly among the boys.

Again, however, as was the case with religious self-image, perhaps the most significant observation here is the general tendency for each ethnic grouping to be polarized on this orientation into two substantial opposing categories. While at least 40% of all ethnic-sex groupings indicated religion as important in selecting a mate, generally similar and sometimes larger proportions considered religion unimportant.

III. Parents' Religious Participation

Mothers (Table 6)

Similar patterns of ethnic differences were observed to exist among both boys and girls in reference to mothers' church attendance; although those for the boys were not nearly as substantial as those among the girls. The most prominent patterns are:

(1) Black mothers were the most frequent attenders.

(2) Mexican American mothers were the least frequent attenders.

Table 5. Importance of Future Spouse Having Same Religion as the Respondent: A Comparison of Ethnic Types of Texas Rural Youth by Sex

Importance of Same Religion	Males			Females		
	Black %	White %	Mex.Am. %	Black %	White %	Mex.Am. %
1. Not Impt.	14	26	14	20	28	16
	(39)	(55)	(35)	(50)	(55)	(44)
2. Not Very Impt.	25	29	21	30	27	28
3. Impt.	26	23	31	18	30	32
	(50)	(43)	(58)	(43)	(44)	(54)
4. Very Impt.	24	20	27	25	14	22
5. No Infor.	11	2	7	7	1	2
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100
N	98	133	178	94	138	201
Mean Score	2.67	2.39	2.76	2.54	2.30	2.61

$X^2 = 19.03$ $X^2 = 25.26$

d.f. = 8 d.f. = 8

P = <.02 P = <.01

$\bar{C} = .25$ $\bar{C} = .31$

Table 6. Mothers' Attendance at Religious Services Among Ethnic Types of Texas Rural Youth by Sex

Frequency of Church Attendance	Males			Females		
	Black %	White %	Mex.Am. %	Black %	White %	Mex.Am. %
1. Never/Prac. Never (Seldom)	10 (20)	14 (30)	16 (36)	3 (13)	27 (44)	10 (38)
2. Few Times a Yr.	10	16	20	10	17	28
3. 1-2 Times a Mo.	21	15	16	12	14	19
4. Once a Week (Frequent)	36 (54)	32 (53)	36 (45)	37 (69)	26 (41)	30 (41)
5. Once a Wk. or More	18	21	9	32	15	11
6. No Information*	5	2	3	6	1	2
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100
N	98	133	178	94	138	201

* No Information is excluded from Chi Square evaluations.

$X^2 = 14.93$	$X^2 = 110.83$
d.f. = 8	d.f. = 8
$.05 < P < .10$	$P = <.001$
$\bar{C} = .25$	$\bar{C} = .57$

Obviously, the rate of frequency of attendance of White mothers fell between these extremes; however, they more closely approximated the Mexican-Americans than they did the Blacks.

Fathers (Table 7)

Exactly the same patterns of ethnic differences were observed for fathers' church participation as were observed for mothers' participation: the only difference being that the ethnic variability is much stronger among boys in this case.

Mothers and Fathers Compared (Table 8)

A comparison of rates of fathers' and mothers' frequency of church attendance quickly led to the conclusion that the youths' perceptions of these indicated a clear and consistent, sex-role difference cutting across all three ethnic types. Consequently, I decided to put these percentage distributions side by side in a new tabular display to show clearly this pattern (Table 8). From this presentation of the data it can be quickly seen that church participation of fathers and mothers differs in a clear and consistent manner, regardless of ethnic type: fathers are substantially less likely to participate than mothers.

It is interesting to note that even though the ethnic groupings demonstrate consistent and somewhat marked difference in church participation of both parents, they are very similar in this sex-role patterning between mothers' and fathers' behavior. If this sex-role patterning is marked and consistent it could (through family socialization) produce the gender differences noticed previously among the male and female youth serving as subjects here. It is a well documented fact that parents remain "significant others" and role models for their children into late adolescence (Bealer, Willits, and Maida, 1965). If this is so we should see some positive correlations between the

Table 7. Fathers' Attendance at Religious Services Among Ethnic Types of Texas Rural Youth by Sex

Frequency of Church Attendance	Males			Females		
	Black %	White %	Mex.Am. %	Black %	White %	Mex.Am. %
1. Never/Prac. Never (Seldom)	19 (34)	29 (48)	30 (57)	26 (33)	38 (52)	28 (53)
2. Few Times a Yr.	14	19	27	7	14	31
3. 1-2 Times a Mo.	12	17	12	4	9	14
4. Once a Week (Frequent)	22 (42)	16 (30)	21 (26)	28 (43)	20 (29)	17 (20)
5. Once a Wk. or More	20	14	5	15	9	3
6. No Information	13	5	5	20	10	7
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100
N	98	133	178	94	138	201
	$X^2 = 31.03$			$X^2 = 59.77$		
	d.f. = 10			d.f. = 10		
	P = <.001			P = <.001		
	$\bar{C} = .33$			$\bar{C} = .42$		

Table 8. A Comparison of Respondents' Mothers and Fathers Frequency of Church Attendance by Ethnic Type

	Black			White			Mex. Amer.		
	Moth. %	Fath. %	Dif. %	Moth. %	Fath. %	Dif. %	Moth. %	Fath. %	Dif. %
Seldom	17	33	(+16)	37	50	(+13)	37	58	(+21)
Monthly	16	8	(-8)	14	13	(-1)	17	13	(-4)
Frequent	61	42	(-19)	48	29	(-19)	44	23	(-21)
No Infor.	6	17	(+11)	1	8	(+7)	2	6	(+4)
TOTAL	100	100		100	100		100	100	

religious participation of parents and children when they are matched by sex. We can do this within the context of our data.

Mother-Daughter, Father-Son Comparisons (Tables 9 & 10)

It can be readily seen for the mother-daughter comparisons by ethnicity that the correspondence of frequency rates of attendance is not very good, except for Blacks. This is due to a very consistent and patterned tendency across all three ethnic groupings for girls to indicate markedly more frequent attendance than they report for their mothers. Essentially the same findings exist for the father-son comparisons. Again, we find a strong common pattern that cuts across all ethnic groups: the youth participate in church markedly more frequently than their sex-matched parent - boys more than fathers, and girls more than mothers.

Still, I think it is clear, particularly among the boys that similar sex-role patterning in frequency rate profiles does exist. Perhaps, once these adolescents are in more complete control of their daily lives (i.e., after they leave high school) the sex-matched, parent-child profiles will come into closer alignment. The evidence certainly suggests that many parents may well see church attendance as more important for their teen-age children than for themselves.

One promising prospect for future research would be to explore the nature of matched or mismatched parent-child rates of participation on other behavioral and social variables pertaining to family interaction, decision-making, and quality of life.

IV. Social Class and Ethnic Differences (Table 11)

The two ethnic minority groups, represented by the Black and Mexican-American youth studied here, are relatively disadvantaged in socioeconomic status (SES) as compared with the majority or dominant ethnic group (White

Table 9. A Comparison of Patterns of Church Participation Between Texas Rural Girls and Their Mothers by Ethnic Type

Patterns of Church Particip.	Black			White			Mex. Amer.		
	Moth. %	Daug. %	M-D Dif. %	Moth. %	Daug. %	M-D Dif. %	Moth. %	Daug. %	M-D Dif. %
Seldom	13	7	(-6)	44	21	(-23)	38	17	(-18)
Monthly	12	8	(-4)	14	21	(+7)	19	21	(-2)
Frequent	69	75	(+6)	41	57	(+16)	41	61	(+20)
No Infor.	6	0	(-6)	1	1	(0)	2	1	(-1)
TOTAL	100	100		100	100		100	100	

Table 10. A Comparison of Patterns of Church Participation Between Texas Rural Boys and Their Fathers by Ethnic Type

Patterns of Church Particip.									
	Fath. %	Son %	M-D Dif. %	Fath. %	Son %	M-D Dif. %	Fath. %	Son %	M-D Dif. %
Seldom	33	23	(-11)	48	31	(-17)	57	51	(-6)
Monthly	12	25	(+13)	17	20	(+3)	12	13	(+1)
Frequent	42	52	(+10)	30	49	(+19)	26	36	(+10)
No Infor.	13	0	(-13)	5	0	(-5)	5	0	(-5)
TOTAL	100	100		100	100		100	100	

Table 11. Summary Overview Comparison of Total Ethnic Samples With Lower Class Portion of Each on Selected Religion Attributes

Religion Variable	Sample Units	Bl.	Wh.	M.A.	Total-L.C. Comparison	Bl.	Wh.	M.A.	Total-L.C. Comparison
Baptist (Rel Ident.)	Total	67	47	0	No Change	77	46	0	No Change
	L.C.	72	47	0		80	46	0	
Catholic	Total	0	14	83	No Change	0	13	84	No Change
	L.C.	0	16	85		0	20	85	
Freq. Attend Church	Total	52	49	36	No Change	75	57	61	No Change
	L.C.	54	47	31		76	57	63	
Considered a Relig. Person	Total	52	42	51	MA Change (Slight)	53	59	71	No Change
	L.C.	63	47	(44)		52	57	67	
Rel. Impedes Soc. Attainment	Total	21	9	--	No Change	15	5	--	No Change
	L.C.	14	5	--		4	0	--	
Rel. of Future Spouse	Total	50	43	58	Blacks Change (Moder.)	43	44	54	No Change
	L.C.	(39)	49	55		40	41	56	

youth) as is clearly indicated in Figure 1 (Kuvlesky, Wright, and Juarez, 1971: 137-138). Consequently, it could be argued that any ethnic differences we have observed may be simply correlates of SES. Because of the low number of respondents of each ethnic type and the predominance of "Low SES" among the minority ethnic groupings, it is impossible to implement a rigorous control for the influence of SES on interethnic differences. Instead I decided to control on SES by elimination, by comparing the lower SES segments of the ethnic groupings. Obviously, this limits our ability to generalize about the influence of SES vs. ethnic identity on the religious attributes of youth to only lower class youth. If the ethnic differences observed in comparison of the total ethnic samples are generally observed to parallel those observed for comparison among the Low SES segments of each ethnic grouping, we can assume that the ethnic differences observed have not been caused by ethnic variability in SES.

A summary overview comparison of the patterns of religious involvement and orientation differences by ethnicity for the total samples and the Lower SES segments is given in Table II. Without exception the patterns of differences observed among females are very similar in both cases - the patterns among Lower SES segments are very similar to those observed in the total sample comparisons. Generally, the same is true for males with two exceptions as follows:

(1) Religious Self-Image:

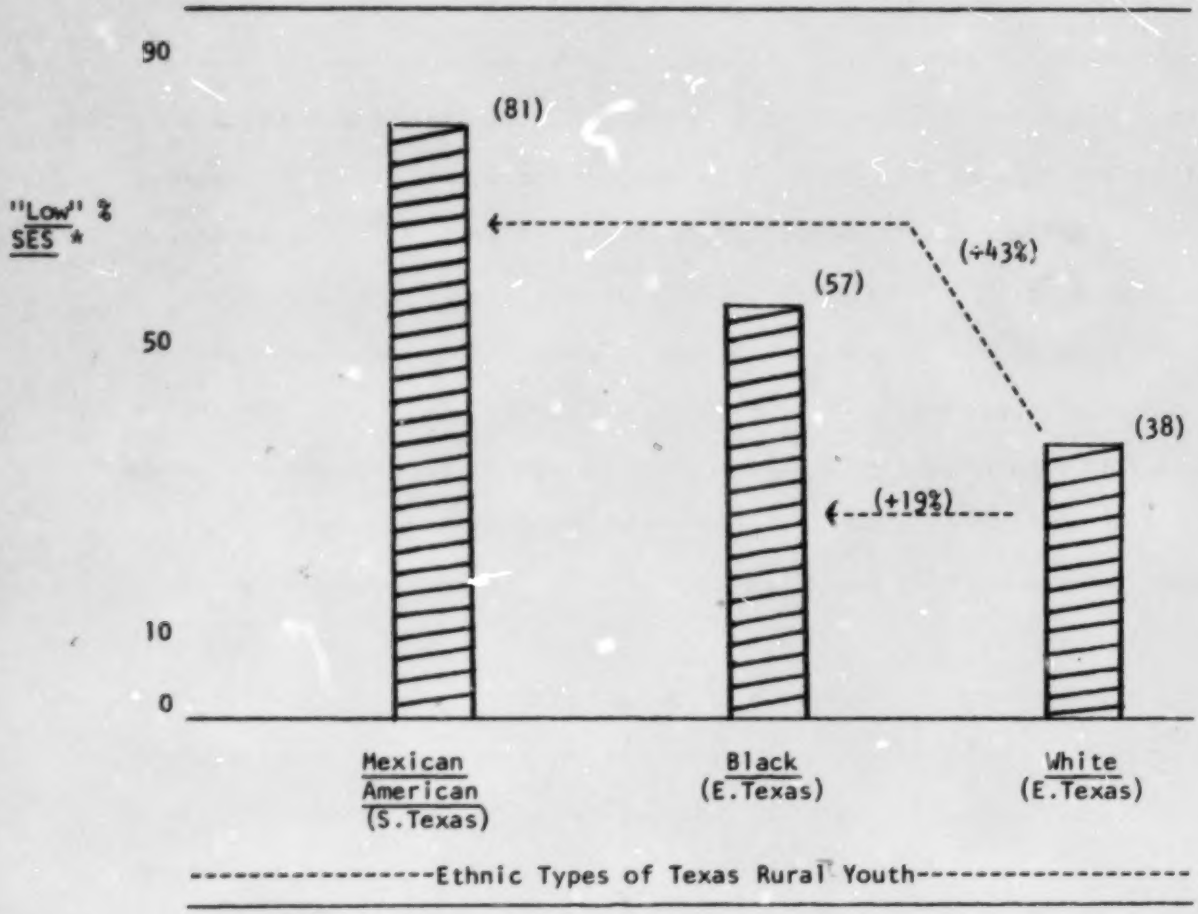
Total Samples	= W<Bl, MA	(In essence the White boys change positions with the other two types.)
Low SES	= MA, Bl<W	

and

(2) Importance of Religion of Future Spouse:

Total Sample	= MA>Bl>W	(In essence the White boys and Black boys switch positions.)
Low SES	= MA>W>Bl	

Figure 1. Ethnic Variation in Socioeconomic Status Among Selected Texas Rural Youth



* Based on dichotomous classification of "Main Bread-winners" occupation as follows:

Low = unemployed, laborers, operatives, and clerical

Higher = all others

This is judged to be a conservative definition of Low SES.

In each case the Low SES exceptions for males only alter the pattern of ethnic difference; it does not eliminate them. In fact, it appears the magnitude of difference in these two cases is greater among the Low SES segments than in reference to the total samples.

It can be generally concluded that ethnic differences persist, and for the most part remain similar in nature and magnitude, when SES is controlled. From this observation it can be inferred that SES does not account for ethnic variability in religious attributes of the youth studied.

One interesting serendipitous finding was produced in the process of implementing this control for the impact of SES. The extent to which religion is perceived as a barrier to attainment of status goals decreases markedly, regardless of ethnicity, among the lower class segments as compared with the total sample. Why do upper SES classes tend to view religion more often as a barrier to status attainment than lower class youth? This would be a good question to follow-up in future research.

V. Summary of Findings

The analysis of the data described previously produced a host of noteworthy findings pertaining to both interethnic differences among the Texas rural youth studied and, at the same time, some consistently similar patterns of religious attributes. It is necessary to pay attention to patterns of similarity among the ethnic groupings involved as well as patterns of ethnic variability if we are to achieve an honest, objective, and balanced comparison. In this summary statement I will first overview briefly the most significant patterns of ethnic variation and then briefly list the most important commonalities. A summary overview of the results of the statistical tests used to evaluate interethnic variability by sex on the respondents'

religious attributes is presented in Table 12. This is followed by a summary overview of interethnic patterns of difference in selected response categories and a description of the nature and strength of interethnic patterns of variability relative to the rural youths' religious involvements, participation, and orientations, presented in Table 13.

Interethnic Differences

1. Religious Affiliation:

   The three ethnic groupings differed markedly in church affiliation: Mexican-American youth were predominantly Roman Catholic, Black youth were predominantly Baptist, and White youth demonstrated a greater diversity of church affiliation than either of the two minority ethnic units.

2. Church Participation by Youth:

   Black youth, regardless of gender, were more frequent participants in religious services than others. Black girls had the highest rates of church participation and Mexican-American boys had the lowest by far.

3. Orientations Toward Religion:

   (a) Religious Self-Image - ethnic differences were not substantial; however, Black girls had a greater tendency to perceive themselves as being viewed as a religious person than others.

   (b) Religion as an Impediment to Status Attainment - Black youth more frequently viewed religion as an impediment than White youth. (No information existed on Mexican-American youth for this variable.)

   (c) Importance of Religion of Future Spouse - Mexican-American youth, particularly among boys, were slightly more likely than others to consider religion as an important attribute of their future spouse.

Table 12. A Summary Comparison of Significance of Ethnic Differences Among Black, White, and Mexican American Rural Youth by Sex

	Significance of Ethnic Differences			
	Males		Females	
Variable	$P(X^2)$	$\bar{C}$	$P(X^2)$	$\bar{C}$
Rel. Identif.	<.001	.80	<.001	.83
Freq. of Church Attend.	<.001	.35	<.001	.31
Viewed as Rel. Person	>.50	---	<.05	.20
Rel. as Imped. to Attain.*	<.01	.29	<.02	.27
Impt. of Rel. of Future Spouse	<.02	.25	<.01	.31
Mother's Church Attend.	.05<P<.10	.25	<.001	.57
Father's Church Attend.	<.001	.33	<.001	.42

* Mexican American sample is excluded here.

Table 13: Summary Overview of Interethnic Variability in Texas Rural Youths' Religious Identification, Participation, and Orientations by Sex

	Ethnic Groups			Ethnic Differences			
	Bl. %	Wh. %	M.A. %	P at .05	C̄*	Nature of Difs.	Magn. of Dif.
A. MALES							
Religion Variables							
Identification							
Catholic	0	14	83	S	.80	MA>W>B	Very Large
Baptist	67	47	0			B>W>MA	
Participation							
Frequent Attend.	52	49	36	S	.35	B>W>MA	Marked
Seldom Attend.	23	31	51			B<W<MA	
Orientations							
Viewed as Religious	52	42	51	NS	---	None	None
Rel. Impedes Attain.	21	9	--	S	.29	B>W	Moderate
Impt. of Rel/Future Spouse	50	43	58	S	.25	MA>B>W	Slight
B. FEMALES							
Religion Variables							
Identification							
Catholic	0	12	85	S	.83	MA>W>B	Very Large
Baptist	77	40	0			B>W>MA	
Participation							
Frequent Attend.	75	57	61	S	.31	B>MA, W	Moderate
Seldom Attend.	7	21	17			B<W, MA	Moderate
Orientations							
Viewed as Religious	53	59	71	S	.20	MA>W>B	Slight
Rel. Impedes Attain.	15	5	--	S	.27	B>W	Moderate
Impt. of Rel/Future Spouse	43	44	54	S	.31	MA>W, B	Slight

* Corrected Coefficient of Contingency (Champion, 1970: pp. 204-207)

4. Parents' Church Attendance:

Ethnic group differences were significant in reference to both fathers' and mothers' patterns of frequency of church attendance. The patterns were the same for both parents but the ethnic variability was more substantial for fathers. The general, important parental patterns of difference observed are as follows:

(1) Black parents more often attend frequently.

(2) Mexican-American parents are least likely to attend frequently.

(3) White parents fall between these two extremes but are more similar to Mexican-Americans than Blacks.

Extension of this line of analysis by contrasting mothers' and fathers' patterns (parental difference) and by comparing sex-matched parent-child profiles of patterns of attendance did not reveal any marked or consistent ethnic differences.

Ethnic Commonalities

Given the interethnic variability among the rural youth described above, a number of strong, consistent patterns were also observed to cut across ethnic groupings. In the following important ways the three ethnic groupings were observed to demonstrate strong and consistent similarities.

1. Religious Affiliation - few youth lacked a particular religious affiliation or, conversely, almost all of these rural youth gave a religious identification.
2. Church Participation of Youth - for each ethnic type boys were less frequent participants than their female counterparts.
3. In reference to religious self-image and importance of religion of future spouse each ethnic group was polarized into two substantial opposing subgroups.

4. Religion as an Impediment to Status Attainment - most Black and White youth did not perceive religion as an impediment.

5. Parents' Church Participation -

   (a) Fathers are much less frequent church attenders than mothers.

   (b) When parent and child participation profiles are matched by gender, children show markedly greater frequency of attendance than parents.

6. SES and Ethnic Patterns

   Generally, SES does not influence substantially either interethnic variability of religious attributes or intraethnic patterns.

DISCUSSION: SIGNIFICANCE OF FINDINGS

The findings of this study have substantial significance for both the development of general empirical knowledge about the religious behavior and orientations of rural youth and ethnic variability in this regard. In addition, the general findings provide insights that have implications for evaluating the explanatory utility of a set of related conceptual tools pertaining to "ethnic subculture" and "minority ethnic" assimilation into the broader society.

There is no question that the three ethnic groupings of youth studied here differed markedly in their religious affiliations. But, given this dramatic difference, interethnic variability in the youths' church participation and religious orientations is uneven, varying in magnitude greatly. Certainly some of these patterns, particularly in reference to frequency of participation, are substantial enough to deserve attention. Still, it seems clear that ethnic differences, and associated variability in religious identification or church affiliation, do not consistently and strongly influence to a great extent patterns of religious behavior or religious orientations of

youth - at least within the limits of the context of variables available in this study.

Much more impressive than the interethnic differences observed was the large number of rather strong and very consistent patterns of similarity observed in reference to religious orientations and sex-role and age-status differentiation relative to church participation. Clearly rural youth share a number of similar patterns in these respects, irrespective of substantial and significant ethnic group differentiation, including minority ethnic vs. dominant ethnic group distinctions. In this sense, the findings strongly suggest that in general Black and Mexican-American minority youth are to a large extent "culturally assimilated" into the dominant religious patterns of the dominant culture. Except for religious affiliation, these two rural minority ethnic units are more like the dominant ethnic unit (i.e. White) than they are different from it.

It would seem that the greatest influence of ethnic identification was in reference to defining membership in particular churches. Yet, membership in different churches did not seem to have a great deal of impact on religious participation or orientations. This seriously brings into question the common notion in sociology that religious identification (by church) is generally a significant element in ethnic subcultural differentiation in contemporary American society (Greeley, 1974: Chpt. 7). This may be true in some cases (i.e., the Old Order Amish); however, it does not appear to be so, to a very great extent, for rural Texas Blacks and Mexican-Americans.

The strong, sex-role patterning observed frequently, particularly in reference to religious participation (for youth and parents), cut very consistently across ethnic group lines. In other words, gender (sex-roles) does make a significant difference in religious behavior and orientations. The

findings also suggest that the sex-role differentiation may be focused in terms of emphasis on a particular sex status somewhat differently among ethnic minorities. You will recall that Black females stood out from all others a number of times in ways indicating a very positive orientation toward religion; whereas, the Mexican-American males demonstrated the converse extreme.

The conceptual and theoretical inferences provided above provide a basis for the development of a number of provacative hypotheses challenging existing theoretical notions about ethnic subcultural differentiation, sex-role socialization, and ethnic minority assimilation in contemporary U.S. society. These deserve attention and should provide guides relative to expanding our research effort in terms of meliorating the paucity of research knowledge about youth in these respects. Surely, we can not continue to assume that religion is of little significance for rural youth and for potentially explaining variability in their behavioral patterns, value oreintations, attitudes, and conceptions of the self. The general findings of this study strongly suggest this would be a mistake. At least it is time we seriously investigated the probable general validity of this assumption.

Whatever the conceptual or theoretical potential of these findings, they have important significance in extending the extant empirical knowledge about rural and minority youth. Obviously the limited scope of this study-in terms of historical period, age of subjects, geographical area, and particular ethnic units-cautions against generalizing the findings too broadly. Yet, they provide a base for the eventual accumulation of comparative data aimed at extending the scope of generalizations possible or discovering the critical factors that limit generalization. The author would be sincerely appreciative of learning about any comparable existing or projected data that might be used for this purpose.

APPENDIX A: INDICATORS

A. Ethnic Identity:

1. What is your race? (Circle one number):

   1 White 2 Negro 3 Oriental 4 Indian 5 Other

2. Are you of Mexican American ancestry? (Circle one number):

   1 Yes 2 No

B. Religious Identification:

What is your religious preference? (Circle one number):

1. Protestant
2. Roman Catholic
3. Jewish
4. Other (What? _____)
5. None

C. Religious Orientations

1. Religious Self Concept

   Do your friends consider you a religious person? ____ Yes ____ No

2. Religion Impedes Social Attainment

   How much effect do you think each of the following things will have in keeping you from getting the job you desire? (Circle one number for each thing):

Very Much	Much	Some	Not at All	
4	3	2	1	My religion

3. Importance of Religion of Future Spouse

We would like to know something about the girl (boy) you would like to marry. If you could marry anyone you desired, how important would each of the following things be in selecting your wife (husband)? (Circle one number for each item.)

	Very Important	Important	Not Very Important	Not Important
Very smart	3	2	1	0
Same religion as mine	3	2	1	0

D. Religious Participation

1. On the average, how often do you attend religious services? (Check one)

_____ a. Never
_____ b. Practically never
_____ c. A few times a year
_____ d. 1-2 times a month
_____ e. Once a week
_____ f. More than once a week

2. On the average, how often does your father (or the male head of household where you live) attend religious services? (Check one)

_____ a. Never
_____ b. Practically never
_____ c. A few times a year
_____ d. 1-2 times a month
_____ e. Once a week
_____ f. More than once a week
_____ g. No father or male head of household present

3. On the average, how often does your mother (or the female head of the household where you live) attend religious services? (Check one)

_____ a. Never
_____ b. Practically never
_____ c. A few times a year
_____ d. 1-2 times a month
_____ e. Once a week
_____ f. More than once a week
_____ g. No mother or female head of household present

E. SES (Main Breadwinner's Job)

What is the main job held by the major money earner of your home? (Write your answer in the following box. Give a specific job, not the company or place worked for.)

Answer:

LISTING OF REFERENCES

Bealer, R.C., F. K. Willits, and P. R. Maida
1965 "The myth of a rebellious adolescent subculture: its detrimental effects for understanding rural youth," pp. 45-61 in L. G. Burchinal (ed.) Rural Youth in Crisis: Facts, Myths and Social Change. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

Burchinal, L. G. (ed.)
1965 Rural Youth in Crisis: Facts, Myths, and Social Change. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

Champion, Dean J.
1970 Basic Statistics for Social Research. Chandler Publishing Co.: Scranton, Pa.

Faulkner, Joseph E. (ed.)
1972 Religion's Influence in Contemporary Society - Readings in the Sociology of Religion. Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co.: Columbus, Ohio.

Glock, Charles Y. and Rodney Stark
1965 Religion and Society in Tension. Rand McNally & Co.: Chicago.

Greeley, Andrew M. and William C. McCready
1974 Ethnicity in the United States: A Preliminary Reconnaissance. John Wiley and Sons: New York.

Hassinger, Edward W.
1978 The Rural Component of American Society. The Interstate Printers and Publishers, Inc.: Danville, Illinois.

Kuvlesky, William P.
1973 "Rural Youth - Current Status and Prognosis," pp. 321-342 in David Gottlieb (ed.) Youth in Contemporary Society. Sage Publications: Beverly Hills, California.

Kuvlesky, William P.
1977 "Youth in Northern Taos County, New Mexico: No One Cares." Paper presented at the 1977 annual meetings of the Association of Humanist Sociology, Hempstead, New York, November.

Kuvlesky, William P. and William C. Boykin
1977 Black Youth in the Rural South: Educational Abilities and Ambitions. Las Cruces, New Mexico: ERIC-Clearing House on Rural Education on Small Schools, January.

Kuvlesky, William P. and Everett D. Edington
1976 "Ethnic Group Identity and Occupational Status Projections of Teenage Boys and Girls: Mexican American, Black, Native American, and Anglo Youth." Paper presented at the Southwestern Sociological Association annual meetings, Dallas, Texas, April.

Kuvlesky, William P. and Rumaldo Juarez
1975 "Mexican American Youth and the American Dream," pp. 241-296 in J. Steven Picou and Robert E. Campbell (eds.) Career Behavior of Social Groups. Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co.: Columbus, Ohio.

Kuvlesky, William P. and Philip M. Monk
1975 "Historical Change in Status Aspirations and Expectations of Mexican American Youth From the Border Area of Texas: 1967-1973." Paper presented at the Southwestern Sociological Association, San Antonio, March.

Kuvlesky, William P., Dave Wright, and Rumaldo Z. Juarez.
1971 "Status Projections and Ethnicity: A Comparison of Mexican American, Negro, and Anglo Youth." Journal of Vocational Behavior 1 (April): 137-151.

Nash, R. C. (ed.)
1965 Rural Youth in a Changing Environment. Washington D.C.: National Committee for Children and Youth.

Nyberg, Kenneth L.
1978 "Drug Abuse and Drug Problems in Rural America: Description, Assessment, and Implications." Forthcoming, Office of Drug Abuse Policy.

Patella, Victoria and William P. Kuvlesky
1973 "Situational Variation in Language Patterns of Mexican American Boys and Girls." Social Science Quarterly, 53 (March.)

Preston, J.D.
1969 "Religiosity and Adolescent Drinking Behavior." Soc. Q (Summer): 372-383.

Salisbury, W. Seward
1964 Religion in American Culture - A Sociological Interpretation. The Dorsey Press: Homewood, Illinois.

Yankelovich, Daniel
1974 The New Morality - A Profile of American Youth in the 70's. McGraw-Hill Book Co.: New York.